

VIA CRUCIS VIVIENTE

ENGLISH COMPANION GUIDE

*A Good Friday collaboration
between the parishes of Our Lady
of Guadalupe, St. Patrick, St.
Anthony, and St. Hyacinth.*

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Opening Prayer

Lord Jesus, on this Good Friday, we want to walk with you. You did not suffer from a distance. You took into your own body rejection, violence, injustice, and abandonment.

Open our eyes to recognize you in those who are crucified in our own day. Open our hearts to stay close to you with faithfulness and love.

And as we contemplate your Passion, give us a deeper love for you and a truer love for our brothers and sisters. Amen.

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1st Station: Jesus Is Condemned to Death

Jesus, they condemn you even though they know you are innocent. You are condemned not because of truth, but because of pressure, fear, and convenience. Your sentence does not come from justice, but from a system that washes its hands.

Even today, people are judged before they are heard. They are reduced to a file, a number, a label, a suspicion. Migrants arrive fleeing danger, seeking safety, work, and life – and before anyone knows their story, they have already been judged. Harsh words are thrown at

them: “illegal,” “criminal,”
“burden,” “problem.” Sometimes
the sentence does not come from a
judge with a gavel. It comes from a
lie, a signature, an endless delay, a
decision made far away, or a
hardened heart.

Jesus, you know what it is to be
misunderstood, accused, and
handed over.

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2nd Station: Jesus Takes Up the Cross

Jesus, now the threat has become real. The cross is on your shoulders. The wood is rough. It splinters. It scrapes. It weighs you down. It forces your body to bend. And still you walk.

Many migrants did not leave home looking for adventure. They left because they could no longer stay. They carried a backpack, some papers, a change of clothes, a photograph, a rosary, a phone number written on a small piece of paper. They carried debts. They carried promises. They carried responsibility for children, parents,

spouses, and siblings. They carried the hopes of an entire family.

Some crosses are not chosen. They are placed on us because life has become unbearable. Because wages are not enough. Because violence is too close. Because the future has closed in. Because staying behind had become its own kind of death.

Jesus, you did not carry the cross like a distant hero. You carried it with human shoulders. That is why you can walk with those who still carry more than they can bear.

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3rd Station: Jesus Falls the First Time

Jesus, you fall. For a moment, the weight is too much. Your body gives way. The earth receives your face. It will not be the last time. But this first fall shatters something: the illusion that anyone can make it through unwounded.

The migrant journey also has its first fall. Sometimes it is exhaustion. Sometimes hunger. Sometimes thirst. Sometimes fear in the dark. Sometimes the betrayal of someone who promised help but brought harm instead. Sometimes it is blisters, fever, confusion, a crying child, a mother who cannot go on, a

father trying to look strong when inside he is already breaking.

And sometimes the fall does not happen on the road, but in the first months after arriving: when there is no steady work, when the language is unfamiliar, when too many people sleep in one room, when the body is here but the heart is still far away.

Jesus, you know the shock of that first fall. Teach us not to be ashamed of our own falls, or the falls of others.

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4th Station: Jesus Meets His Blessed Mother

Jesus and Mary meet. No words are needed. A mother looks at her broken son. A son looks at his mother and knows that she too is carrying the cross. The sorrow passes between them. So does love.

How many mothers know that moment: the goodbye at a bus station, at an airport, in a doorway, before sunrise. The bag of food packed with love. The rosary tucked into a backpack. The embrace that lasts too long because no one knows when they will see each other again. The message they wait for: "I made it." The call that never comes.

And not only the mothers who stay behind. Also the mothers who migrate in fear, the mothers who cross with their children, the mothers who live with the anguish of not always being able to protect them, the mothers who fear that a child may not come home from school, from work, from an errand, from a traffic stop. And there are sons and daughters too, carrying the pain of watching their mother work herself to the bone, cry in private, and live divided between two worlds.

Mary, sorrowful mother, you did not let go of Jesus. Teach us how to stay close without running away.

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5th Station: Simon Helps Jesus Carry the Cross

Jesus, you accept help from a man who did not leave home expecting to be drawn into your suffering. Simon does not fix everything. He does not remove the cross. He does not stop the injustice. But he places his shoulder under the weight, and that changes something.

So too in the lives of many migrants, salvation comes in small and humble ways: someone offers water, lends a phone, translates, drives them to an appointment, offers a bed for the night, helps fill out a form, goes with them to the hospital, says, "You are not alone."

And very often that Simon is not someone powerful. It is another poor person. Another migrant. Another tired woman. Another family that is also struggling, and still finds something to share.

Lord, free us from thinking that help belongs only to experts or institutions. Sometimes the Kingdom of God begins with one simple act that carries another person through the next step.

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6th Station: Veronica Wipes the Face of Jesus

Lord Jesus, your face is covered with sweat, blood, dust, and contempt. Veronica cannot change the sentence, but she dares to come near. She pushes through the violence to return a little dignity to you.

So often mercy begins just like that: not with a grand solution, but with a gesture that reminds someone they are still human. A shower after days on the road. A clean towel. A diaper. A hot meal. A pair of dry shoes. A blanket. A voice that says your name with care. A person who does not look at you with disgust or

suspicion. A community that does not first ask what papers you have, but how you are.

The poor do not need pity. They need to be treated with dignity.

Veronica does not use your suffering, Jesus. She does not turn your pain into a spectacle. She comes near with reverence.

Lord, give us that kind of courage: to draw near with tenderness, without intruding, without performing, without turning another person's suffering into a chance to feel good about ourselves.

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7th Station: Jesus Falls the Second Time

Jesus, you fall again. This second fall hurts in a different way. You already know what it is to fall. You know the taste of dust. You know how hard it is to get back up. And still the cross keeps pressing down.

There is a second fall in the migrant story too. It comes after arrival. When it seemed that the hardest part was over. When life in this country looked easier from a distance. And then new crosses appear: stolen wages, endless hours, fear of driving, loneliness, overcrowded housing, the shame of not understanding, the weariness of

nonstop work, homesickness that does not let go, discrimination, the wound of always feeling like an outsider.

Some survive the journey only to be worn down slowly after they arrive.

Jesus, stay near to those who are exhausted by a long and silent struggle — those who have not given up, but for whom every day costs more.

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8th Station: Jesus Consoles the Women of Jerusalem

Jesus, even in your suffering, you still see others. You do not dismiss the tears of those women, but you lead them deeper. You ask them to see the suffering growing in their own homes, in their children, in their people.

Today too there are women who weep for their children. Women who hold families together. Women who work from morning to night. Women who migrated alone. Women who fled violence. Women who live with the fear that their children will be humiliated, confused, or trapped between two

worlds. Women who watch their children become translators, carry adult burdens too early, and learn to hide their fear so they will not worry the family.

And there are young people too, growing up with the ache of not fully belonging here or there. Young people who love the story of their parents, yet carry questions, pressures, and wounds that few people notice.

Jesus, give us a compassion that does not end in emotion alone. Give us a compassion that becomes care, listening, and responsibility.

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9th Station: Jesus Falls the Third Time

Jesus, this time you fall from sheer exhaustion. There is almost nothing left. You have lost blood. You have been beaten. The road feels endless. Your body no longer wants to respond.

So too there are people who, after years of struggle, reach a third fall. Not the fall of one day, but of a life worn thin. Years waiting for an answer. Years sending money home while holding back tears. Years unable to visit a sick mother or bury a dead father for fear of not being allowed back. Years of back pain, worn-out knees, cracked hands,

sleepless nights, anxiety, sadness. Years of pretending everything is fine so as not to worry loved ones far away.

There is a kind of exhaustion no one sees. Hidden weariness. The kind that only God knows.

Jesus, when there are no words left and a person can barely keep going, you still understand. You do not turn away from the fatigue of the poor.

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10th Station: Jesus Is Stripped of His Garments

Jesus, they strip you in front of everyone. It is not enough for them to wound you; they want to humiliate you too. They leave you exposed, defenseless, without privacy, without dignity.

How many migrants know something of that stripping away. Things large and small are taken from them: documents, money, privacy, security, name, time, reputation. Sometimes they are searched, photographed, separated from their belongings, made to wait, spoken to as if they understand nothing, as if they feel

nothing. Other times the loss is quieter: losing the language of daily life, losing family support, losing familiar customs, losing a sense of authority in the home because children learn more quickly how to move through this country, losing even the possibility of return.

And yet, even stripped and exposed, you remain the beloved Son of the Father. Humiliation cannot take away your dignity.

Lord, teach us to defend the God-given dignity of every human person.

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11th Station: Jesus Is Nailed to the Cross

Jesus, now you do not only carry the cross — you are nailed to it. You are pinned in place. Your hands and feet, made for walking, touching, blessing, and lifting others up, are fastened to the wood.

Some people live something like this when they are trapped in systems that crush them. Nailed to fear of going out. Nailed to a job where they cannot speak up. Nailed to debt. Nailed to constant threat. Nailed to a situation where one mistake could cost everything. Nailed to the anguish of not being able to visit a sick loved one. Nailed

to a life of survival with no room to rest, breathe, or dream.

And more than that: many migrant bodies are literally wounded by hard, dangerous, underpaid, invisible labor. Tired bodies that help carry this country, while often being despised by it.

Crucified Jesus, you know what helplessness feels like. You know what it is to be unable to come down from the cross on your own.

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12th Station: Jesus Dies on the Cross

Jesus, you go all the way to the end. You surrender your life. Dead on the cross, you seem defeated. And yet even here, in this final moment, you place yourself into the Father's hands.

There are deaths that cut deeply into the migrant story. People who do not make it. People who die on the journey. People who disappear and are never found. People who die far from their homeland, far from their mother, far from the embrace of their own family. And there are families who grieve not

only a death, but also the absence of a body, a grave, a final goodbye.

There is also another kind of dying: when hope is slowly crushed, when fear dries out the soul, when the heart becomes hard just to survive.

Jesus, you entered the deepest depths of human suffering. There is no pain, no death, no abandonment where you have not already gone before us.

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13th Station: Jesus Is Taken Down from the Cross

Jesus, at last they take you down from the cross. Your broken body returns to your mother's hands. Mary receives what is left. She cannot change what happened. She cannot turn back time. She can only hold you with faithful love.

How many mothers, fathers, siblings, and spouses know that pain: receiving terrible news, gathering what remains, asking for help with a funeral, collecting money to bring home a body or ashes, weeping without understanding. And how many

other families have not even had that much. No body. No answer. No place to mourn.

Mary teaches us not to turn away from the wounded body. To hold it with reverence. To grieve with dignity. Not to abandon the one who has been crushed by violence or injustice.

In a culture that grows used to other people's suffering too quickly, Mary calls us to stop — to receive, to weep, to honor.

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14th Station: Jesus Is Placed in the Tomb

Jesus, they place you in the tomb. Everything grows quiet. The stone seems to have the final word. Your friends go home brokenhearted. Mary waits. The Church waits. The whole world holds its breath.

There are also tomb-like seasons in the migrant experience. Seasons of waiting. Seasons of darkness. Seasons when life feels shut in: the appointment that never comes, the family reunification that does not happen, the family divided across borders, the case that remains stalled, the hidden depression, the dream put on hold. Some people

live for years in that Holy Saturday darkness, caught between grief for what has been lost and uncertainty about what comes next.

But this tomb does not erase the love of God. The night does not cancel the promise. The stone will not last forever.

Today, on Good Friday, we do not pretend that everything is fine. We weep. We fall silent. We wait. And even in the darkness, we trust that God is still at work where all we can see is the tomb.

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Closing Prayer

Lord Jesus crucified, we have walked with you on the way of the cross. We have contemplated you condemned, burdened, fallen, stripped, nailed, dead, and laid in the tomb. And as we have looked upon you, we have tried to recognize you in migrant families, in weary workers, in mothers who wait, in children who are afraid, in those who are detained, in those who are humiliated, and in those who have lost so much and still keep waiting.

Do not let this prayer remain only a passing emotion. Make it a path of

conversion. Make it true
compassion. Make it concrete
solidarity. Make it a community
that accompanies. Make it a Church
that does not pass by.

At the foot of your cross, teach us to
see with new eyes, to judge less, to
listen more, to accompany more
faithfully, and to recognize that
wherever a brother or sister suffers,
you are there.

You who live and reign forever and
ever. Amen.

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If this prayer has been meaningful to you, and you would like to help sustain this ministry, you are welcome to [make a contribution here:](#)



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